

### *Abstract of the Disclosure:*

A supportive addition to reference application 09/225,229 where alternative air distribution devices are used to connect multiple bores in cored oak slabs used for the aging of wine. Example configurations are shown including manifolds, air loops or air caps, all of suitable food grade materials. The disclosure also describes a voided out oak slab which does not rely on bores to bring air to the interior of the oak slab and an oak slab that has transverse slots to increase oak surface in contact with wine.

### **Claims**

With the above disclosures, the following claims are made:

1. A device to pneumatically innerconnect multiple air passages in cored oak slabs used for maturing wine comprised of:
  - a. Impermeable food grade material and
  - b. Air intake and air exit ports to allow connection from one said oak slab to another or to an external air environment and
  - c. A method of sealing said device to said oak slab comprised of a food grade sealant or neoprene grommet.
2. The device in Claim1 where said pneumatic innerconnect is accomplished by a cast neoprene manifold with ports aligned to match said cores in said oak slabs.
3. The device in Claim1 where said pneumatic innerconnect is accomplished by air loops constructed of cast neoprene, plastic or stainless steel and connected from one said core to another said cores in said oak slabs.
4. The device in Claim1 where said pneumatic innerconnect is accomplished by an air cap constructed of cast neoprene or plastic and placed over said oak cores in said oak slabs.
5. A method for increasing wine/air contact in said oak slabs comprised of transverse slots cut through said oak slabs between said cores.
6. A method for introducing air inside said oak slabs comprised of voided out interior volume of said oak slabs.

### **General Remarks**

**Conditional Request for Constructive Assistance** – Applicant has submitted the specification and claims of this application so that they are proper, definite and define

novel structure which is also unobvious. If for any reason this application is not believed to be in full condition for allowance, applicant respectfully requests the constructive assistance and suggestions of the examiner pursuant to M.P.E.P. § 2173.02 and § 707.07(j) in order that the undersigned can place this application in allowable condition as soon as possible and without need for further proceedings.



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